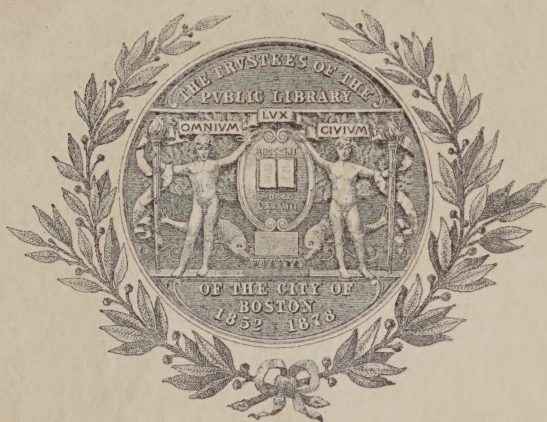




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No. 4053.101



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(ADDRESS, 1842)

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE HARVARD MUSICAL ASSOCIATION

IN THE

4053.101

CHAPEL OF THE UNIVERSITY AT CAMBRIDGE,

AUGUST 24, 1842.

BY WILLIAM W. (STORY.)

PRINTED AT THE REQUEST OF THE SOCIETY.

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY S. N. DICKINSON.

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From 8053.16

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Aug. 18. 1869

" Von ihrer Zeit verstoßen, flüchte
Die Ernste Wahrheit zum Gedichte
Und finde Schutz in der Kammenen Thor.
In ihres Glanzes höchster Hülle,
Furchtbarer in des Reizes Hülle,
Erstehe sie in dem Gesange
Und räche sich mit Sieges-Klänge
An des Verfolgers feigem Ohr."

SCHILLER.

VERBODEN
TO
TOEGESCHRIJVEN

A D D R E S S .

THE exceedingly limited time which has been allotted to me for the preparation of this address, renders it necessary that I should beg your indulgence for the rambling nature of my remarks; for to use the words of Pliny the Younger: "I have not had time to write you a short letter, therefore I send you a long one."

In attempting to condense into words the feelings and thoughts which have long haunted me concerning music, I feel myself as a child, who, standing upon the sands, beholds the ocean stretching before it without visible shore, yet who would fain enclasp it within the circle of his arms. So nearly impossible does it seem to comprehend within the reach of language, the boundless spirit of music, that every word that I speak only seems to limit what in its essence is illimitable, and to chain and fetter that which is free as air. To many I may seem extravagant in what I shall say; but it will be only to those who have neither deeply felt nor profoundly studied its nature, that any words will seem to out-run my subject. Truly "music is," as Hoffman says, "the sanscrit of nature expressed in tones." It seems to me like that cloudy pillar which led the Israelites of old, which rested upon the earth and buried its head in the heavens, which fore-ran their wanderings, which guided their steps, which no

hands could touch, and yet which was a visible presence whereon was impressed the finger of God.

By the term music, I must not be understood to include any compositions constructed from those vapid common-places, and that unmeaning jingle, which are floating about at random, and whose only claim to be so considered, lies in the fact, that they are subjected to the rules of the art; but rather, to intend that modulation of sound, and procession of harmonies, which is the exponent of a deep sentiment, and the revelation of a spiritual truth.

Art has been the culminating blossom of every century. The refined sensualism of the Grecian polytheism embodied itself in the harmonious form of sculpture; the aspiration and humane fervor of Catholic christianity invested itself in the warm coloring of painting; and latterly, the depth of a less ascetic love and sentiment hath been interpreted to us in the language of music. What Phidias was to the classic age of Greece, Raphael was to the Catholic era of the middle ages in Italy, and Beethoven is to the romantic age of our own day. It would be curious to follow out the various developements which music acquired in the progress of the religious sentiment, from the stern reiteration of the unison in the old Romish church, through the Protestant questioning and high argument of Sebastian Bach, in the involved and intricate fugue, to the God-spoken serenity of Handel, and the lofty aspiration of Beethoven. In our age, these great souls have successively risen in a perfect growth, each representing a different phase of one great whole,—“four faced to four corners of the sky.” In Bach, we behold the struggle of the soul in form and in the rules of art—a struggle which is made in trust and hope, and which is always successful. The fugue, through its curious entanglements and intricate windings, plying with a thousand shuttles the self-

same web, and as constantly fulfilling in the end the perfect flower in its tissue, seems to represent that mental phase, when, through struggle and earnest will, the individual is developing from the seemingly inharmonious elements and diverging forces of his nature, the true and simple idea of his life. In Mozart we find the evolvment of impulse and passion, the humors of temperament and constitution, and the natural re-action of the mind upon incident. His music is dramatic and full of individual characterization; and in the opera, wherein his genius found its true scope and expression, he has left the most perfect master-pieces of the art in the *Zauberflöte* and the *Don Giovanni*. He represents, therefore, the social relations of man. The world of Haydn is the world of sense—the offspring of healthy animal spirits, prompting a soul delicate in its sympathies and pure in its impulses. It is full of love, happiness and a child-like, contented health. The shadows of sorrow and discontent are but as passing cloud-shades—that slight petulance which is instantly effaced by a smile. His genius, while it faithfully mirrors the forms and colors of external nature, bestows upon them the tinge of a fanciful and refined sentiment—even as the clouds and trees and downward heavens, when painted in the calm depths of a lake, borrow from that reflection a tender beauty unpossessed before. His music is descriptive, abides in the half sentiments, and represents the childhood of man and his sensuous relations to nature. Then comes Handel, the form of the perfected man, steady, clear, simple and strong. Such exquisite directness and truth lie in his melodies, that they seem fore-ordained to the thought which they embody. In his music is no vacillation, no indeterminateness, but a calm energy, and faith continually attaining its end, and completing its design. What more was needed to represent the forces and phases of the

universal man? We already had the childhood and simple abandonment to impulse—the struggle and birth of will—the character, and relations of passion—and the educated force of the perfect man. But *genius* as yet had not been represented; and the relations of the internal world were reserved to be expressed by a soul deeper than all—by Beethoven. That infinite aspiration which overflows all the moulds of art; that yearning, which can not be repressed within the limits of form; that restless self dissatisfaction with what is accomplished; that haunting presence of a power which urges on the soul with vast and infinite whispers—all, in sooth, which we mean when we speak of genius—it was for Beethoven to express. And has he not achieved his task? The fifth symphony in C minor—the work of his complete manhood,—seems distinctly to enunciate the story which was allotted him to tell; the story of genius struggling with nature for expression. In the first grand division is developed the limitation and prohibition which nature asserts to the aspirations of the spirit, and that blind struggle between the soul and fate, as of one in the folds of a snake. Here is painted the spasmodic effort and failure,—the aimless seekings—the panting as for breath within a confined atmosphere—the fatal approximation to despair—the doubts—the fears—the disappointment. It is, as Beethoven himself said, “as if fate was knocking at the door.” In the second movement is the morning landscape of a new era, whereon the beams of faith and hope are dawning through the cloudy bars of doubt and distrust, which circle the horizon. Hope as yet is stronger than Faith, and that superstitious child hath not yet left her mother’s side. Still the old wearisome limit, the weakened prohibition, and the echo of a former despair, are heard, like the suppressed growling of a lurking thunderstorm. Aspiration often, in its soaring, changes to doubt and

falls. The two elements of faith and distrust are in conflict, and nothing is accomplished, though all is hoped. Thus ends the "andante," and then breaks in the "scherzo," which is the third movement. Now a new spirit hath grown up, a spirit of strength and power; of giant will as well as of towering aspiration. For a time it tries its strength in sudden efforts of vast force, and then relapses. It is as a champion, who paces the lists, bending his sword to test its temper — shifting his position, and restless for the approaching conflict — then suddenly strengthening and gathering its force to one determination, it spreads its "sail-broad vans for flight." Here the music becomes rapturous in its strength, and the work is accomplished as soon as thought. It soars and soars, and towering onward with a great progression, goes on its limitless journey above, exulting, and as if all barriers were broken down. The motion of the "scherzo" seems to me like that of the gryphon upon which Neptune is mounted in one of Flaxman's outlines. There is in both, the same steady and uniform grandeur. This is the accomplishment of the task, the victory over fate, and only from below come back dim and faint the recollections of a former struggle and a former defeat.

In the music of Beethoven, the simplest thema forms the thread upon which the most wonderful changes are wrought. There are a few notes, a simple hint of enchanting, soul-thrilling melody. It is a cloud no larger than a man's hand, which, as the piece proceeds, darkens up the horizon, overspreads the cope of the firmament, and scatters lightning and thunder and the wild blast from its bosom. Through the wildest and most enchaining modulations, passing from key to key — through the crash of chords varying from the most determinate and sonorous to the most wailing and suspended — the melody moves calmly and steadily. It soars over the

harmonies which roll and sway beneath it — even as a broad-pinioned bird with dripping wings flies calmly over the foaming and heaving ocean. Often there is a blaze of terrific splendor, but the general tone of color in Beethoven's music is sombre and dark, with ever and anon a clear pencilling of light, like the track of a falling star. If I were asked to say what chord peculiarly characterized the music of Beethoven, I should say that it was the flat seventh. Yet though the central idea of his music is aspiration, he is not without that sense of humor which ever accompanies genius. This humor takes a peculiar coloring from the vehemence of his nature. Often after an intricate struggle for the expression of a subtle idea, the music suddenly breaks out into the wildest and most terrific changes, catches at the most grotesque chords, and assumes a furious and terrible humor. This does not last long, however, but from exhaustion soon falls into a sad and prolonged wailing, preparatory to the progression of some new and simple phrase.

I have been led to speak more definitely of Beethoven, because he is now beginning to be better known and appreciated, and because most of my hearers have had an opportunity of listening to an orchestral performance of that symphony, an outline of which I have attempted to sketch.

Truly if any one ever felt in his heart of hearts the great value of music, as culture, it was Beethoven. Unswayed and unbiassed by those misunderstandings of the ignorant and envious, which vented themselves in the abuse of his writings, he held a steady, uniform course, even to the end of his life. That indomitable self-trust, which is the concomitant of greatness, never forsook him. He was without vanity, while he clearly apprehended his genius and his mission. Witness that wild and vehement exposition of his creed, which he delivered to Bettina Brentano, in the streets of Vi-

enna, and beneath a burning sun: "Music is like wine, inflaming men's minds to new achievements, and I am the Bacchus serving it out to them even unto intoxication. When they are sobered down again, they shall find themselves possessed of a spiritual draught such as shall remain with them even on dry land. I have no friend: I must live all to myself. Yet I know that God is nearer to me than to my brothers in the art. I hold converse with him, and fear not, for I have always known and understood him. Nor do I fear for my works. No evil can befall them; and whosoever shall understand them, he shall be freed from all such misery as burdens mankind."

Well might he have addressed to his art, those lines of Shelley in the "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty:"

"I vowed that I would dedicate my powers
To thee and thine: have I not kept the vow?
With beating heart and streaming eyes, even now
I call the phantoms of a thousand hours,
Each from his voiceless grave. They have in visioned bowers
Of studious zeal or love's delight,
Outwatched with me the envious night;
They know that never joy illumed my brow,
Unlinked with hope, that thou would'st free
This world from its dark slavery;
That thou, oh awful Loveliness,
Would'st give whate'er these words cannot express."

Most welcome is it to behold a growing love for art spreading around society its beneficent beams; most cheering are these indications of a susceptibility to beauty gleaming like a smile upon the rugged countenance of our American age. Truly "a thing of beauty is a joy forever." I have little to hope from the music which America shall compose. I seek in vain for indications of a native and spontaneous genius for this art; and it seems to me as if Music was never the

offspring of the Anglo-Saxon mind, though she may well be its friend and intimate. But for that enlargement of soul, that grace of character, that refinement of sentiment, which are the dowry of art, I greet the sound of her coming footsteps. America must owe its regeneration to art. Art will deepen its thought, elevate its impulses, direct its efforts, and be a sure shield against that corruption which is but too often engendered in the warmth of unrestrained republicanism. When art shall supply a channel for the restless activity of the people, and afford scope for the exercise of a different series of powers, they will become less morbidly intent upon the shifting and agitating subject of politics; and while the mind of the country grows deeper and stronger, the legislation will be less swayed by the ignorant enthusiasm of popular factions.

But music, before it can attain that position from which it shall coöperate with the arts in sending forth an influence to purify the morals and strengthen the character, must itself be recognized as an art. Too long has it held only the precarious foothold of an accomplishment, worthy to scourge away no darker fiend than ennui; whose greatest benefit was the relaxation it afforded to the exhausted mind; and whose best use was to supply our leisure hours with an occupation at once harmless and agreeable. Let us take this degrading view of it no longer. That Music may serve such a purpose, we admit; but that this should be considered as her highest culture, is a most gross reproach to an intellectual people. Let us put it in its proper niche, as an art embodying the highest and noblest cravings of our nature, and demanding for its developement not the chance effort of a leisure hour, but the steady pursuit of a whole life; an art whose labyrinths it is permitted only to master spirits to thread; a height from which the low interests and offices of every-day

business, soiled as they are by falsehood, meanness and servility, only look the meaner and more dwarfish; a universal language, which penetrates the dimmest chambers of the spirit, evokes the recollections of the past and the hopes of the future—awakens high resolutions, earnest wishes and noble desires—speaks with the voice of angels, and is the nearest language to the soul of man; an art which demands an assiduous cultivation of powers, a delicate susceptibility of organization, a subtle apprehension of the intuitions, the utmost weakness conjoined with the utmost strength, for its attainment. It is not until we take this truth to heart, that music will receive its due.

Nature is crowded full of music. No motion can occur without expressing it: from the moaning pine tree to the “solemn sea-like bass” of a thousand voices. Wood and wire, earth, air and ocean are full of music; and those wild inarticulate breathings of sound, seem to be to nature what the soul is to man. As in every soul there lies the germ of all powers and the prophecy of immortality—so every note contains the embryo chord and predicts its harmony.

Music is in its essence the principle of all art. So soon as the soul assumes for its product the roughest garb of art, so soon is there perceptible the shadow of music; as in the rhythm of poetry, the modulation of prose, the flowing outline of sculpture, the harmonies of color, the “frozen music” of architecture, the varying intonation of common speech, in the smile, in grace, which is musical motion, in nature, which is the art of God. Almost it seems to be the soul of the universe, which weaves all nature symmetrically and harmoniously around itself. The fabled music of the spheres; the Theban walls which gathered orderly at the lyre of Amphion; the evocation of Eurydice from the jaws of Erebus; the Cerberus which Orpheus charmed; are all but recogni-

tions of its divinity. But in these our American scenes, Music has been expelled from the temples of the gods, and driven as an outcast from our hearts. She has begged her bread from door to door. Ears were too busy with bargaining and huckstering to listen to her. Many received her as a toy, and soon tired of her; many sneered and repelled her; and only a few souls, recognizing her divinity, have felt that her presence bestowed a light and peace upon the meanest home. These few have erected to her temples, and many a soul now lights a divine enthusiasm from her altar. Pilgrims begin to flock to her shrine, and we to-day have met to lay our offerings before her. In the lap of our mother I rejoice that this wandering child hath been taken and recognized. It is fit that she should find rest here.

All art is language. In the soul of the artist, nature is transmuted and reformed in some shape, which is art. The truth and force of a true work of art are incalculable. A simple thought or feeling whose heart is laid in the true use of beauty, will vibrate over the whole world. There is no end to its blessing: it is of higher worth than wood, fire and clothing, for it warms, feeds and clothes the heart. It goes over the broad continent, and is not lost on the waste of waters; it touches the heart of the lonely forester in the western prairie; it assails the ears of kings; it makes science its friend and ally, and the winds and waves cherish it. Art writes out the stone history of religion in the Grecian temples, in the Gothic cathedral, and in the Catholic St. Peters. It gleams through the battling verse of Homer, the ascetic rime of Dante, and the majestic cadence of Milton; it carves the statues of Greece and of the Medicean age; it paints the cartoons and the terrific forms of the Sistine Chapel; it breathed through the early shepherd's pipe upon the Grecian plain, and in the august and imposing beauty of the Messiah.

The heaven-born truth which lay in the one greatest soul, runs like a shuttle with a golden thread through the great tissue of events. On the dark ground of despair shine the "gold candles" of those, whose aspiration was higher than to be bounded within the uses of this world; and the great names of Homer, Michel-Angelo, Dante, Shakspeare, Goethe and Beethoven, stand like watch-towers, burning wearilessly, and with the proud assurance that only by being true to ourselves, we may conquer the world and time.

To the musical composer, all of beauty becomes melodious air. His soul is but a harp which an infinite breath modulates; his senses are but as strings which weave the passing air into rhythm and cadence. Poetry is a much coarser transmutation of thought, though she has stolen the wings of her sister. Words are but weak hieroglyphs of the inner sense compared with tones: words are deflected from their original significance, and wear away; but tones are one and the same for ever. In a casual word, the intonation may reveal instantaneously, what accumulated pages could not so clearly interpret. All the emotions, passions and sentiments wreak themselves upon our tones. In them is revealed the habitual pursuit of life, as well as the evanescent feeling of the moment. There are the false intervals of the querulous, the chromatics of the despondent, the monotone of the weak-minded, the diatonic of the enthusiastic. The tones of our voice are like the expression in the eye, which give us glimpses into the inner world. How cold and lifeless seem those printed words, which, when they trembled on the inspired lips of the orator, were winged with fire—which thrilled us through, and stopped the blood in our veins as he spoke them! They are but the dry bones which were before blooming and radiant in color and life. All this is so familiar, that we pass it by as trite. But music treasures these

suggestions, and on this scaffolding erects a temple of fire and air, radiant with a thousand hues, and permanent as the soul. Do we then claim too much for music? Is it so wonderful that the "electric chain with which we are darkly bound" should vibrate to the touch of these gathered tones, when the simplest of them all reveals more than we can speak, and nearest all that we feel? Is it not, as Carlyle says, "a kind of inarticulate unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the infinite, and let us for a moment gaze into that" —

But the effort of musical art is not to imitate the sounds of nature, and whenever it stoops to this process, it degenerates into mere skill. A far higher and more difficult task devolves upon the composer. He must apprehend that subtle essence of melody which permeates nature. He must separate the accidental and extraneous from the inherent and necessary, and by a delicate intuition, as well as by a careful selection, penetrate to that pure rhythm which lies behind the sound, in the very essence of the thing. In this view, music is not an imitative art, but the most purely ideal of all arts. It is the art by which that strangely undefined presence, which we recognize in all harmonious scenery, which haunts all forms of beauty, and pervades the face that we love; that answering glance to the soul's countenance, which we see in all simple existences, whether of thought or of external nature, is developed and renewed to us in tones. Its mission is not to reproduce the image of the forest, the sound of the brook, the motion of the trees; but simply to awaken and revive that feeling which lay concealed within them more secretly than the tide in the ocean, and, as it were, with a renewing breath to fan to a clear glow those memories over which the ashes of forgetfulness are gathering. Notes themselves are no more music, than words are poetry. They are but the means. The music itself dwells in the soul of

him who wrote, and is reproduced only to him who can re-form in his own soul that great whole, which is here suggested only in scattered fragments. He who brings the most, finds the most; and knowledge and susceptibility are necessary prerequisites to its full appreciation. What we are ignorant of, we despise and undervalue; and it is as foolish to expect an unsusceptible and uncultivated mind to apprehend the high language of music, as the most intricate formula in algebra. Hence the so often expressed wish, that the meaning of a particular composition should be interpreted and translated into thought, and the dissatisfaction consequent upon the refusal.

But how can this be done? Describe me the faces of Raphael and Titian, and so exhaust their meaning, that they shall seem copies from your words; paint me the 'Excursion,' or even that shapeless shape which stood at the infernal gates,

" Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
And shook a dreadful dart : what seemed his head,
The semblance of a kingly crown had on ;"

chisel me from the cold marble, the warm, moist, fragrant mornings of Claude's pencil: then ask to have music done into poetry. It is in vain: one art cannot be transmuted into another. That which is ordained to one form, and susceptible of one expression, will not flow into another mould. The art is necessitated to the thought. The harmonies of color are lost in stone; the sublimity of sculpture disdains the robes of coloring; and the fluid spirit of music will not congeal into words. In every art there resides a certain charm, which is peculiar to itself; and music, which only begins where speech ends, is in its very nature transcendental, and is only music by not being words. No poetry can track

its flight; the spirit of analysis cannot penetrate its mystery; and the understanding never dreamed of that vague mysterious world into which it soars. *Why* it is such a language — *how* it awakens such emotions — cannot be answered. We may only say, such is simply the fact. The aim of music is not to write a poem, which could be as easily written in words, but to whisper a secret, which must otherwise remain unspoken; to weave around you a spell, which no other art can evoke, and to give you finally nothing more nor less than music. As such you must be willing to enjoy it. You must resign yourself to its influence, willingly and without skepticism; you must abandon yourself to it as to an element which cannot be thwarted; or you will find not music, but a mere jingle of sounds, wearisome to the sense, and without nourishment for the soul. If your thought can be painted, rhymed or chiselled, it was not meant to be sung. But when that consciousness, which is the primary existence of thought, and that feeling, which is the primal motion of beauty, demand an utterance, pour it forth in music. Music is not so much one thing, as the essence of all things; and it is singular to find how definitely the rules of harmony often interpret the laws of nature, and how adequate a formula its language affords to express the more delicate and subtle distinctions of thought. After a study of music, we continually find that by means of its technology, we can translate into words, what it would otherwise be impossible clearly to express, and thereby also give a light, shade and illustration to our ideas. Thus music even in its verbal formula is worthy to be recognized among the sciences.

Not only is music a blessing to us in our highest moods, but it sheds a light and beauty over our most common life. It idealizes the lowest scene; it bestows every where gladness and refinement; it enlarges the charities and purifies the af-

fections. In the song, which is its simplest form, it enchains and entwines the spirit in a willing net; it ministers to love when words have failed; it relieves the burden of a deep-seated sorrow; it lightens aspiration and prayer; it is no respecter of persons, but sits beside the mother who rocks her cradle in the squalid cell of poverty, as willingly as at the tables of kings. It occupies the same relation to the great instrumental writings, that the old English ballad does to the dramatic and metaphysic epos of poetry. In the national song, it welds together a people. The 'Ca Ira' was almost the rudder of the French revolution. How throbbed the wild, vehement heart of France, when that war-song startled the summer skies, borne upward on the voices of thousands! Is not the anthem of 'God save the King' the air-spun cable of English loyalty? Did not the Moorish spirit so kindle beneath the tones of the mournful ballad of the 'Siege of Alhama,' that under pain of death it was forbidden to be sung within the walls of Granada? See too, how thoroughly the national song is impregnate with the spirit of the people; in the saddened and broken-hearted melodies of the Irish; in the bold and picturesque tumult of the Scottish war song; in the light-hearted yet shallow spirit of the French chansonette; in the passionate caprice of the Italian canzone; in the subdued sentiment of the Spanish romanceros; in the shrill yodeln of the Swiss, which only elaborates the hint given by every echo in their native Alps; and in the deep and serene spirit that throbs in the German lieder, and, clear, broad, and fertilizing as their own Rhine, pulses through the great German nation. How many hearts have not the songs of Schubert thrilled, and the songs of Burns inspired? How many a pain and sorrow have they not soothed away — how many a temptation have they not thwarted — how many an aspiration have they not kindled — how many a true thought have

they not begotten? "Certainly," as Sir Philip Sidney himself says, "I must confess mine own barbarousness; I never heard the old song of 'Piercy and Douglas,' that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet; and yet it is sung but by some blind crowder, with no rougher voice than rude stile." Is not then Music an infinite world, within whose atmosphere the weariest spirit, surcharged with the toils and cares of life, may find a sure rest and gather a new strength, so that through its virtue this old world of ours shall be fairer and brighter in our eyes, and renewed in beauty and promise?

It is not now the time to ask, what is the use of art? Such a question is not worthy of an answer. Beauty is its own great use, which cannot be measured by a petty utilitarianism.

*"Was wir als Schönheit hier empfunden
Wird einst als Wahrheit uns entgegen gehn."*

Shall the shallow demands of an every-day interest, the short-sighted policy of a petty traffic, the obsequious deference to a narrow self advancement, be compared for a moment with those arts which are set far above the tumult and turmoil of life, and exist only in the pure recesses of the soul? Is the penny one puts in his pocket worth more than the thought with which he dowers his mind? When we have piled our golden sheaves, and have wherewithal to feed and clothe our bodies daintily, have we attained the end of life? Lies not the great problem of self culture far beyond, a deeper and more central want than that of the sense? Almost it seems as if the hand of utilitarianism blinded the eyes from the sight of an eternal beauty. Art will not perhaps put money in our pockets, but it will give to the spirit "riches fineless."

*"Nur durch das Morgenthor des Schönen
Drangst du in der Erkenntniß land."*

True art appeals not to the calculating prudence of an every-day life, but to that sense of the infinite which is the soul of all religion, and that love of the beautiful which is the fragrantcy of all action. Long after the institutions of Greece had crumbled to the dust, and her laws and religion were but matters of history and tradition, the silent statues of her gods still stood majestic and unperishing. The statues at Rome frowned from their pedestal upon her impious and effeminate sons, and besought them with their marble lips to abjure those impieties and luxuries, which finally accomplished the downfall of the empire; and still they stand amid the wreck of a ruined people, their lingering grace and their sole redemption. Thus will it be with the works of those great composers, which, though suggested by occasion, were yet planted in the depth of a great spiritual nature; their steady tones shall outlive the fleeting fashions of centuries of years, and shall mould the hearts and characters of a nation which yet sleepeth in the bosom of futurity.

“ As all nature's thousand changes
But one changeless God proclaim,
So in art's wide region ranges
One sole meaning still the same.

“ This is truth, eternal reason,
Which from beauty takes its dress,
And serene through time and season,
Keeps for aye its loveliness.”

I know I do not place this noble art of music too high. Not to all is the clue given to its infinite mystery; but an infinite mystery it is, which is not to be blown into fine dust by the cavilling dogmatism of the skeptical. When I reflect that the view which I take of music is the same that every greatest soul that ever was initiated into its rites, has taken; when I remember the words of Beethoven, and consider the

lives of Handel, Mozart, Bach and of a thousand others, whose love and reverence for it only increased with their knowledge and power, I feel assured that it is not the idle and meaningless thing that some would insist, but truly a language which proclaims the prophecy of immortality. I feel assured that I cannot be wrong, though a thousand lips should sneer at my enthusiasm, and call my speech the ravings of folly. At such moments, I recall the sentences of him whose words have been called "half-battles." "There is no doubt that many seeds of noble virtues are to be found in such souls as are touched by music; but those who have no feeling for it I hold them to be like stocks and stones. Who-so despises music, as all fanatics do, with him I am not pleased—for music is a gift of God, and not an invention of man. It drives away the devil, and makes people cheerful: then they forget all wrath, impurity, pride, and other vices. After theology, I give music the next place and highest honor; and see how David and all saints have uttered their devout thoughts in rhyme, verse and song. Music I have always held dear." Such words from a heart so stout and manly, that the infernal presence could not shake it from a calm equipoise, are not without significance. No one ever accused Martin Luther of effeminacy.

The fear hath lately suggested itself, that music would be absorbed in instrumentation, and in the attempt to accomplish impossibilities of execution, would be deflected from its genuine sphere and buried beneath its ornament. The new school of modern France and Germany has produced rather a series of dexterous instrumentalists, than of great creators and originators. The passion for novelty, which characterizes the taste of the present age, is better suited with phantasy pieces, full of wild changes, flights and freaks—full of coquetry, brilliancy and bravura—than with the simple

character of a profounder school. The effort of this late school has been rather to overcome instrumental difficulties, to attain to a skilful management of technicalities, and to acquire an accomplished mechanism of fingering, than to explore the mystery of music. Thus in our concerts, we but too often feel that the composition was written solely to display the power of the instrument or the skill of the player, and the music sacrificed entirely to attain that end. Yet though the modern school of music is not profound, it is graceful and accomplished. Let us do all honor to the naive and spirited waltz of Strauss, the tender gracefulness of Henselt and Chopin—the fantastic and picturesque grotesqueness of Litz, and the towering cloud-scenery of Thalberg; but let us not be guilty of the folly of comparing them with the sublime works of Handel and Beethoven—or even with those of Bellini, Weber, Glück, Himmel and Spohr.

I would congratulate my friends, and all who love music as it should be loved, upon the opportunities which have been afforded us within the last year, to listen to genuine music, performed by artists of feeling and skill. It has not been a slight gratification to hear the deep expression which the violoncello of Knoop yearned forth—the fiery freaks and the pathetic tenderness which have in turn been drawn from the violin by the skilful bows of Nagel and Herwig. Rakeman has also again favored us, and beneath his touch the pianoforte has been as a running stream of harmonies. We have also listened to Spohr's oratorio of the "Last Judgment," and heard the "Adelaide" of Beethoven, from the pure contralto of Mad. Spohr Zahn. But chiefly I rejoice and congratulate you upon the orchestral concerts of the Academy of Music. Therein was Music courted for her own sake. There was but one cause for regret, but it was painful to those who remembered the crowds which flocked to Henry

Russell's concerts, to contrast them with the small audiences which were convoked by the charms of true art. But if the audiences were small, they were appreciating. "Fit audience they found, though few;" and we sincerely hope that sufficient patronage may be secured to encourage a continuance of these concerts during the approaching winter. They have done much towards creating a better taste, and awakening a stronger interest in music; and we would fondly anticipate the time when this slight foreign graft may grow to such breadth and strength, that the whole people may refresh themselves beneath the grateful coolness of its shade.

As yet we are only beginning, and the prospects of the artist look discouraging. The man whose life is spent in the closet, and whose evidence of action is not a bustling activity, finds but little favor, and is considered as an idler. But when we remember that those great works which stay through the washing and wasting of time, were not accomplished save by the most untiring devotion, and by an earnest struggle against the prejudices of the age, and often time in bitter want and sorrow, we should take heart and fear not. That "mystic song" which Dante chanted from an exiled shore, "*patriis extorris ab oris*," was not the product of an idle hour: it was won by pain and toil, in struggle and by a great earnestness; it was written almost in his blood; and ere it spoke to the world, had, as he says, "made him lean for many years." No great aim was ever won easily; and the paths to greatness are strewn with difficulties.

This age is in too great a hurry, to take time to be truly great; it is impatient of that discipline which is the necessary training even of the highest genius. Our science is but too often a happy guess — our arts a lucky hit — our literature the amorphous and incongruous product of a ready talent, and not the careful elaboration of deep and thoroughly

digested thought. What is wanting in thought is supplied by words ; what is deficient in truth is made up in striking effects. We need earnestness, study, discipline ; we have too much surface and too little depth ; and so long as we recognize no other object and aim in life than the amassing of wealth, so long our nation will be poor in spirit if not in purse. While art seeks its reward in a popular applause, and lives on the fleeting breath of notoriety, content with that praise which is the flattery of fashion, and subservient to that prejudice which is the bubble of the hour, so long will it be the slave when it should be the master. So far from leveling its thought to meet the superficial demand of a shallow and insincere age, it should be the duty of art to chasten the mind, to deepen the heart, to strengthen the will of the century. With the true artist it is as with the dweller in the Polar regions, where the sun sweeping below the horizon spreads a rare twilight over the nightly sky ;—and thus the artist, in the night of disappointment and neglect, feels brooding around his horizon a serene light, which cannot fade away. It is not for the soul to which such visions come, to bend and crouch before the world : rather let him wear the front of an undaunted warrior, to whom fear and danger are as shadows, beneath which the battle can be better fought. Let him cast aside the cumbersome armor of patronage, and stand free and naked, like the angel Michael, to dazzle with his splendor the eyes of the low, and to plunge the vengeful sword of purification into the grovelling heart of his age. Let him ask no favor, but come stern-eyed and unflinching, armed by his own strong will. Is it for souls like this to be moulded by their age ? No, a higher, nobler task is theirs. Beneath their plastic fingers that age shall be as wax, as it is in the hands of the great for ever. There is nothing so high in pride, as shall not crumble ; nothing so low and humble,

as shall not be sublimed and uplifted ; nothing so fixed in baseness, as shall not be crushed. Even the slavery of custom and the despotism of opinion shall shrink and become powerless before their eyes. Their spirits shall be uplifted, and standing alone in their truth, shall make the whole world bend to them. It is not to him, who, truckling with the thoughts that come, makes life a bargain, that the spirit of art shall descend. Love and faith, and a hope that flies sunward with unflinching eyes, are the companions of the true artist : nay, more even than this, an unalterable trust in the truth of his own nature, a determination never to balk his impulses, nor to be false to his instincts, nor to waste that time in vain questioning which should be spent in doing — but feeling that form, and color, and words, and tones, are but the means of expressing his great mission to mankind, and that art is but the veil on which its text is to be woven, it behooves him to leave his soul to the inward guidance, and to prompt his life by an earnest will. Let me finish with the words of Beethoven :

“ Would you know the true principle on which the arts *may* be won ? It is to bow to their immutable terms ; to lay all passion and vexation of spirit prostrate at their feet, and to approach their divine presence with a mind so calm and so devoid of littleness, as to be ready to receive the dictates of fantasy and the revelations of truth. Thus the art becomes a divinity ; man approaches her with religious feelings ; his inspirations are God’s divine gifts ; and his aim fixed by the same hand from above which helps him to attain it.”

